

same time imposing strict ethical standards.

House Republicans refused to listen to our Nation's leading scientists, biomedical researchers, and health organizations who said this legislation can save lives. More importantly, they refused to listen to the pleas of their own constituents. Instead, they once again supported a President who has no interest in giving our researchers the tools they need to find cures to diseases like cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's. They were pandering to a very narrow part of their base. Shame on them.

RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. AL GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I speak for the least among us. And in speaking for them, I remind us that it is time for us to raise the minimum wage. That is "raise" as in r-a-i-s-e, not raze as in r-a-z-e, because there are people in this country who would raze, who would decimate, not elevate, who would decimate the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, these people are not among those 37 million who are living in poverty. They are not among the millions who make \$5.15 an hour. They are not among those who suffer and languish in poverty with no way out.

Mr. Speaker, those who make \$5.15 an hour work through Christmas. They work through Easter. They work through Thanksgiving. And they make, at the end of the year, \$10,712.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to raise the minimum wage. I speak for the least, the last, and the lost.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 3525) to amend subpart 2 of part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to improve outcomes for children in families affected by methamphetamine abuse and addiction, to reauthorize the promoting safe and stable families program, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 3525

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) For Federal fiscal year 2004, child protective services (CPS) staff nationwide reported investigating or assessing an estimated 3,000,000 allegations of child maltreatment, and determined that 872,000 children had been abused or neglected by their parents or other caregivers.

(2) Combined, the Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) programs provide States about \$700,000,000 per year for services intended to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. These programs are considered the largest source of targeted Federal funding in the child protection system for prevention—that is, for services to ensure that children are not abused or neglected and, whenever possible, help children remain safely with their families.

(3) States have broad flexibility in directing CWS dollars to protect children from abuse and neglect. Under the PSSF program, States must invest significant portions of program funds in family preservation services, family support services, time-limited reunification services, and post-adoption support services.

(4) However, a 2003 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported that little research is available on the effectiveness of activities supported by CWS funds—evaluations of services supported by PSSF funds have generally shown little or no effect.

(5) Further, the Department of Health and Human Services recently completed initial Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSRs) in each State. No State was in full compliance with all measures of the CFSRs. The CFSRs also revealed that States need to work to prevent repeat abuse and neglect of children, improve services provided to families to reduce the risk of future harm (including by better monitoring the participation of families in services), and strengthen upfront services provided to families to prevent unnecessary family break-up and protect children who remain at home.

(6) Federal policy should ensure that States are appropriately targeting CWS and PSSF funds to assist at-risk families and protect abused and neglected children to address issues found in the CFSRs. Encouraging States to invest their CWS and PSSF funds in services that promote and protect the welfare of children, support strong, healthy families, and reduce the reliance on out-of-home care, will help ensure all children are raised in safe, loving families.

(7) CFSRs also found a strong correlation between frequent caseworker visits with children and positive outcomes for these children, such as timely achievement of permanency and other indicators of child well-being.

(8) However, a December 2005 report by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General found that only 20 States were able to produce reports to show whether caseworkers actually visited children in foster care on at least a monthly basis, despite the fact that nearly all States had written standards suggesting monthly visits were State policy. In fact, 7 of these 20 States indicated that fewer than half of the children in foster care were visited on a monthly basis.

(9) The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 provided \$40,000,000 in fiscal year 2006 for the PSSF program which this Act ensures will be available and which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will increase manda-

tory budget authority by \$40,000,000 each year from 2006 through 2015, for a total of \$400,000,000.

(10) A 2003 GAO report found that the average tenure for a child welfare caseworker is less than 2 years and this level of turnover negatively affects safety and permanency for children.

(11) Targeting additional PSSF funds to ensure children in foster care are visited on at least a monthly basis will promote better outcomes for vulnerable children, including by preventing further abuse and neglect.

SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM.

(a) ELIMINATION OF FINDINGS.—Section 430 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629) is amended by striking all through "(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose" and inserting the following:

"SEC. 430. PURPOSE.

"The purpose".

(b) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE COST REIMBURSEMENT.—Section 434 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting ", subject to subsection (d)," after "shall"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(d) LIMITATION ON REIMBURSEMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Secretary shall not make a payment to a State under this section with respect to expenditures for administrative costs during a fiscal year, to the extent that the total amount of the expenditures exceeds 10 percent of the total expenditures of the State during the fiscal year under the State plan approved under section 432.".

(c) FUNDING OF MANDATORY GRANTS AT \$345 MILLION PER FISCAL YEAR.—Section 436(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629f(a)) is amended by striking "for fiscal year 2006." and all that follows and inserting "for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.".

(d) FUNDING OF DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.—Section 437(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629g(a)) is amended by striking "2002 through 2006" and inserting "2007 through 2011".

(e) INCREASE IN SET-ASIDES FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—

(1) MANDATORY GRANTS.—Section 436(b)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)(3)) is amended by striking "1" and inserting "3".

(2) DISCRETIONARY GRANTS.—Section 437(b)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629g(b)(3)) is amended by striking "2" and inserting "3".

(f) COLLECTION OF DATA ON TRIBAL PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PLANS.—Section 432(b)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629b(b)(2)) is amended—

(1) by striking subparagraph (A); and

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking "Notwithstanding subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, the" and inserting "The".

(g) AUTHORITY OF INTERTRIBAL CONSORTIA TO APPLY FOR GRANTS.—Section 432(b)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629b(b)(2)), as amended by subsection (f) of this section, is amended—

(1) by inserting before subparagraph (B) the following:

"(A) INTERTRIBAL CONSORTIA.—This subpart shall not be interpreted to preclude the development and submission of a single tribal plan under this subpart by the participating tribes of an intertribal consortium."; and

(2) in subparagraph (B)—

(A) by inserting "or tribal consortium" after "Indian tribe"; and

(B) by inserting "and tribal consortia" after "Indian tribes".

(h) TECHNICAL CORRECTION.—Section 431(a)(6) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629a(a)(6)) is amended by striking "1986" and inserting "1996".

SEC. 4. TARGETING OF INCREASED SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM RESOURCES TO SUPPORT MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS.

(a) RESERVATION AND USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 436(b) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629f(b)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(4) SUPPORT FOR MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS.—

“(A) RESERVATION.—In the case of each of fiscal years 2006 through 2011, the Secretary shall reserve \$40,000,000 for allotment in accordance with section 433(e).

“(B) USE OF FUNDS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—A State to which an amount is paid from amounts reserved under subparagraph (A) shall use the amount to support monthly caseworker visits with children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the State, with a primary emphasis on activities designed to improve caseworker retention, recruitment, training, and ability to access the benefits of technology.

“(ii) NONSUPPLANTATION.—A State to which an amount is paid from amounts reserved pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall not use the amount to supplant any Federal funds paid to the State under part E that could be used as described in clause (i).”

(2) EFFECT ON AMOUNTS RESERVED FOR INDIAN TRIBES.—Section 436(b)(3) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629b(b)(3)) is amended by striking “The” and inserting “After applying paragraph (4) (but before applying paragraphs (1) or (2)), the”.

(b) ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS.—Section 433 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (d), by inserting “subsection (a), (b), or (c) of” before “this section” the 1st and 2nd places it appears; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) SPECIAL RULES APPLICABLE TO FUNDS RESERVED TO SUPPORT MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS.—

“(1) ALLOTMENTS.—

“(A) TERRITORIES.—From the amount reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for fiscal year 2006 or any succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each jurisdiction specified in subsection (b) of this section that meets the requirements of paragraph (2) of this subsection for the fiscal year an amount determined in the same manner as the allotment to each of such jurisdictions is determined under section 423 (without regard to the initial allotment of \$70,000 to each State).

“(B) OTHER STATES.—From the amount reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for fiscal year 2006 or any succeeding fiscal year that remains after applying subparagraph (A) of this paragraph for the fiscal year, the Secretary shall allot to each State (other than an Indian tribe) not specified in subsection (b) of this section that meets the requirements of paragraph (2) of this subsection for the fiscal year an amount equal to such remaining amount multiplied by the food stamp percentage of the State (as defined in subsection (c)(2) of this section) for the fiscal year, except that in applying subsection (c)(2)(A) of this section, ‘subsection (e)(1)(B)’ shall be substituted for ‘such paragraph (1)’.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of this paragraph are the following:

“(A) AMOUNTS ALLOTTED FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.—In the case of amounts reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for fiscal year 2007, the State has provided to the Secretary data which shows, for the most recent fiscal year for which such information is available—

“(i) the percentage of children in foster care under the responsibility of the State who were visited by the caseworker handling the case of the child at least once each month while the child was in such care; and

“(ii) the percentage of the visits that occurred in the residence of the child.

“(B) AMOUNTS ALLOTTED FOR SUCCEEDING FISCAL YEARS.—In the case of amounts reserved pursuant to section 436(b)(4)(A) for fiscal year 2008 or any succeeding fiscal year:

“(i) DATA SHOWING FREQUENCY AND LOCATION OF CASEWORKER VISITS.—The State has provided to the Secretary data which shows, for the preceding fiscal year, that—

“(I) for at least 90 percent of the children in foster care under the responsibility of the State—

“(aa) the caseworker handling the case of the child visited the child at least once each month while the child was in such care; and

“(bb) the majority of the visits occurred in the residence of the child; or

“(II) the State made the requisite annual progress, as determined by the Secretary, to comply with subclause (I) by October 1, 2011.

“(ii) STATE ABILITY TO VERIFY FREQUENCY OF CASEWORKER VISITS.—The Secretary has verified that the State has in effect such policies and standards as may be necessary to enable the State to determine whether, for at least 90 percent of the children in foster care under the responsibility of the State, a caseworker visited the child at least once each month during the fiscal year.

“(iii) VERIFICATION OF NONSUPPLANTATION COMPLIANCE.—The State has provided to the Secretary such documentation as may be necessary to verify that the State has complied with section 436(b)(4)(B)(ii) during the fiscal year.”

(c) PAYMENTS TO STATES.—Section 434(a) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629d(a)), as amended by section 3(b)(1) of this Act, is amended by striking “the lesser of—” and all that follows and inserting the following: “the sum of—

“(1) the lesser of—

“(A) 75 percent of the total expenditures by the State for activities under the plan during the fiscal year or the immediately succeeding fiscal year; or

“(B) the allotment of the State under subsection (a), (b), or (c) of section 433, whichever is applicable, for the fiscal year; and

“(2) the lesser of—

“(A) 75 percent of the total expenditures by the State in accordance with section 436(b)(4)(B) during the fiscal year or the immediately succeeding fiscal year; or

“(B) the allotment of the State under section 433(e) for the fiscal year.”

SEC. 5. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM.

(a) FUNDING.—Subpart 1 of part B of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 620–628b) is amended by striking sections 420 and 425 and inserting after section 424 the following:

“LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

“SEC. 425. To carry out this subpart, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary not more than \$325,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2007 through 2011.”

(b) PURPOSE OF PROGRAM.—Such subpart is further amended—

(1) by striking section 424;

(2) by redesignating sections 421 and 423 as sections 423 and 424, respectively, and by transferring section 423 (as so redesignated) so that it appears after section 422; and

(3) by inserting after the subpart heading the following:

“PURPOSE

“SEC. 421. The purpose of this subpart is to promote State flexibility in the development and expansion of a coordinated child and family services program that utilizes community-based agencies and ensures all children are raised in safe, loving families, by—

“(1) protecting and promoting the welfare of all children;

“(2) preventing the neglect, abuse, or exploitation of children;

“(3) supporting at-risk families through services which allow children, where appropriate, to remain safely with their families or return to their families in a timely manner;

“(4) promoting the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care; and

“(5) providing training, professional development and support to ensure a well-qualified child welfare workforce.”

(c) MODIFICATION OF STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—Section 422 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 622) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking paragraphs (3) through (5) and inserting the following:

“(3) include a description of the services and activities which the State will fund under the State program carried out pursuant to this subpart, and how the services and activities will achieve the purpose of this subpart;”;

(B) by striking paragraph (6) and inserting after paragraph (3) (as added by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph) the following:

“(4) contain a description of—

“(A) the steps the State will take to provide child welfare services statewide and to expand and strengthen the range of existing services and develop and implement services to improve child outcomes; and

“(B) the child welfare services staff development and training plans of the State;”;

(C) by redesignating paragraphs (7) through (9) as paragraphs (5) through (7), respectively;

(D) in paragraph (10)—

(i) by striking subparagraph (A);

(ii) in subparagraph (B)(iii)(II), by inserting “, which may include a residential educational program” after “in some other planned, permanent living arrangement”;

(iii) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (A); and

(iv) by striking subparagraph (C) and inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) has in effect policies and administrative and judicial procedures for children abandoned at or shortly after birth which enable permanent decisions to be made expeditiously with respect to the placement of the children;”;

(E) in paragraph (14), by striking “and” at the end;

(F) in paragraph (15), by striking the period and inserting a semicolon;

(G) by redesignating paragraphs (10) through (15) as paragraphs (8) through (13), respectively; and

(H) by adding at the end the following:

“(14) include assurances that not more than 10 percent of the expenditures of the State with respect to activities funded from amounts provided under this subpart will be for administrative costs; and

“(15) outlines how the State will ensure that physicians or other appropriate medical professionals are actively consulted and involved in—

“(A) assessing the health and well-being of children in foster care under the responsibility of the State; and

“(B) determining appropriate medical treatment for the children.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) DEFINITIONS.—In this subpart:

“(1) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The term ‘administrative costs’ means costs for the following, but only to the extent incurred in administering the State plan developed pursuant to this subpart: procurement, payroll management, personnel functions (other

than the portion of the salaries of supervisors attributable to time spent directly supervising the provision of services by caseworkers), management, maintenance and operation of space and property, data processing and computer services, accounting, budgeting, auditing, and travel expenses (except those related to the provision of services by caseworkers or the oversight of programs funded under this subpart).

“(2) OTHER TERMS.—For definitions of other terms used in this part, see section 475.”

(d) PROVISIONS RELATING TO STATE ALLOTMENTS.—Section 423 of such Act, as so redesignated by subsection (b)(2) of this section, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by inserting “IN GENERAL.—” after “(a)”; and

(B) by striking “420” and inserting “425”; and

(C) by striking “He” and inserting “The Secretary”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “DETERMINATION OF STATE ALLOTMENT PERCENTAGES.—” after “(b)”; and

(B) by striking “per centum” each place it appears and inserting “percent”; and

(3) in subsection (c), by inserting “PROMULGATION OF STATE ALLOTMENT PERCENTAGES.—” after “(c)”; and

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) by inserting “UNITED STATES DEFINED.—” after “(d)”; and

(B) by striking “fifty” and inserting “50”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

“(e) REALLOTMENT OF FUNDS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The amount of any allotment to a State for a fiscal year under the preceding provisions of this section which the State certifies to the Secretary will not be required for carrying out the State plan developed as provided in section 422 shall be available for reallocation from time to time, on such dates as the Secretary may fix, to other States which the Secretary determines—

“(A) need sums in excess of the amounts allotted to such other States under the preceding provisions of this section, in carrying out their State plans so developed; and

“(B) will be able to so use such excess sums during the fiscal year.

“(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—The Secretary shall make the reallocations on the basis of the State plans so developed, after taking into consideration—

“(A) the population under 21 years of age;

“(B) the per capita income of each of such other States as compared with the population under 21 years of age; and

“(C) the per capita income of all such other States with respect to which such a determination by the Secretary has been made.

“(3) AMOUNTS REALLOTTED TO A STATE AMOUNTS DEEMED PART OF STATE ALLOTMENT.—Any amount so reallocated to a State is deemed part of the allotment of the State under this section.”

(e) PAYMENTS TO STATES.—

(1) EXCLUSION OF EXPENDITURES FOR CHILD DAY CARE, FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE PAYMENTS, AND ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS FROM ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES.—Section 424 of such Act, as so redesignated by subsection (b)(2) of this section, is amended—

(A) in subsection (c)—

(i) in paragraph (1)—

(I) by striking “No” and inserting “Except as provided in paragraph (2), no”; and

(II) by striking “, for any fiscal year beginning after September 30, 1979,”;

(III) in subparagraph (A), by striking “necessary” and all that follows through “living”; and

(IV) in subparagraph (C), by striking “, to the extent” and all that follows through “1979”; and

(ii) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) In the case of a State which demonstrates to the Secretary that the State made an expenditure described in paragraph (1) in fiscal year 2005, the Secretary shall not make a payment to the State under this part for any fiscal year beginning after September 30, 2006, with respect to the State expenditures so described, to the extent that the Federal payment with respect to the expenditures so described for the fiscal year exceeds the lesser of—

“(A) the total amount of the Federal payment under this part for fiscal year 1979; or

“(B) the total amount of the Federal payment with respect to the expenditures so described for fiscal year 2005.”; and

(B) in subsection (d)—

(i) by striking “(excluding expenditures for activities specified in subsection (c)(1))”; and

(ii) by striking “such activities” and inserting “activities specified in subsection (c)(1)”; and

(2) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE COST REIMBURSEMENT.—Section 424 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 623), as so redesignated by subsection (b)(2) of this section, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) LIMITATION ON REIMBURSEMENT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Secretary shall not make a payment to a State under this section with respect to expenditures during a fiscal year for administrative costs, to the extent that the total amount of the expenditures exceeds 10 percent of the total expenditures of the State during the fiscal year for activities funded from amounts provided under this subpart.”

(3) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—Section 424(a) of such Act, as so redesignated by subsection (b)(2) of this section, is amended by striking “per centum” and inserting “percent”.

(f) ELIMINATION OF OBSOLETE PROVISION.—Section 426 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 626) is amended by striking subsection (b) and redesignating subsection (c) as subsection (b).

(g) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) Section 428(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 628(b)) is amended by striking “421” and inserting “423”.

(2) Section 429 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 628a) is amended—

(A)(i) by striking the following:

“CHILD WELFARE TRAINEESHIPS

“SEC. 429. The Secretary”; and

(ii) inserting the following:

“(c) CHILD WELFARE TRAINEESHIPS.—The Secretary”; and

(B) by transferring the provision to the end of section 426 (as amended by subsection (f) of this section).

(3) Section 429A of such Act (42 U.S.C. 628b) is redesignated as section 429.

(4) Section 433(b) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629c(b)) is amended by striking “421” and inserting “423”.

(5) Section 437(c)(2) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 629g(c)(2)) is amended by striking “421” and inserting “423”.

(6) Section 472(d) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 672(d)) is amended by striking “422(b)(10)” and inserting “422(b)(8)”.

(7) Section 473A(f) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 673b(f)) is amended by striking “423” and inserting “424”.

(8) Section 1130(b)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1320a-9(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

“(1) any provision of section 422(b)(8), or section 479; or”.

(9) Section 104(b)(3) of the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14914(b)(3)) is amended by striking “422(b)(14) of the Social Security Act, as amended by section 205 of

this Act” and inserting “422(b)(12) of the Social Security Act”.

SEC. 6. REAUTHORIZATION OF THE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM.

Section 438 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629h) is amended in each of subsections (c)(1)(A) and (d) by striking “2006” and inserting “2011”.

SEC. 7. REAUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM FOR MENTORING CHILDREN OF PRISONERS.

Section 439 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629i) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking “2002 through 2006” and inserting “2007 through 2011”; and

(2) in subsection (h), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) LIMITATIONS ON AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS; RESERVATION OF CERTAIN AMOUNTS.—To carry out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2007 through 2011.”

SEC. 8. AVAILABILITY OF ADDITIONAL PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES RESOURCES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006.

(a) APPROPRIATION.—Out of any money in the Treasury of the United States not otherwise appropriated, there are appropriated to the Secretary of Health and Human Services \$40,000,000 for fiscal year 2006 to carry out section 436 of the Social Security Act, in addition to any amount otherwise made available for fiscal year 2006 to carry out such section.

(b) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Notwithstanding section 434(b)(2) of such Act, the amounts paid to States from the amount appropriated under subsection (a) of this section shall remain available for expenditure by the States through fiscal year 2008.

SEC. 9. REPORTS.

Section 435 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 629e) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(e) REPORTS.—

“(1) CONTENT.—The Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate biennial reports on—

“(A) the level of expenditures, and the programs and activities funded, under subpart 1 and this subpart by each State, territory, and Indian tribe to which funds are paid under this part;

“(B) the number of children and families served by each such State, territory, and Indian tribe under the programs; and

“(C) how spending under the programs has helped achieve the goals identified by each such State, territory, and Indian tribe as part of the annual planning process undertaken in developing plans pursuant to this part.

“(2) TIMING.—The Secretary shall submit the biennial reports required by paragraph (1) not later than July 1, 2008, and not later than July 1 of every other calendar year thereafter.”

SEC. 10. EFFECTIVE DATES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this section, the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on October 1, 2006, and shall apply to payments under part B of title IV of the Social Security Act for calendar quarters beginning on or after such date, without regard to whether regulations to implement the amendments are promulgated by such date.

(b) DELAY PERMITTED IF STATE LEGISLATION REQUIRED.—If the Secretary of Health and Human Services determines that State legislation (other than legislation appropriating funds) is required in order for a

State plan developed pursuant to subpart 1 of part B, or a State plan approved under subpart 2 of part B, of title IV of the Social Security Act to meet the additional requirements imposed by the amendments made by this Act, the plan shall not be regarded as failing to meet any of the additional requirements before the 1st day of the 1st calendar quarter beginning after the first regular session of the State legislature that begins after the date of the enactment of this Act. If the State has a 2-year legislative session, each year of the session is deemed to be a separate regular session of the State legislature.

(C) AVAILABILITY OF ADDITIONAL PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES RESOURCES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006.—Section 8 shall take effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

□ 1030

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 3525, as amended. As amended, this legislation reflects provisions as reported by the Committee on Ways and Means on June 29 and included in H.R. 5640, the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006.

I am pleased to be here with the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) who is a cosponsor of this bipartisan legislation. I thank him for his work and leadership on this legislation. I would also like to thank the many Members from both sides of the aisle for their support.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation reauthorizes and improves numerous child protection programs that combined, would provide about \$4 billion during the next 5 years to keep children safe and ensure they are raised in safe and loving families.

These programs are the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, the Child Welfare Services Program, the Court Improvement Program and the Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program.

This legislation supports State efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect by keeping families together and preventing, whenever possible, the unnecessary separation of children from their families.

For example, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program provides resources for family support services, family preservation services, time-lim-

ited reunification services and post-adoption services. We know that one of the best ways to give a child a chance of a bright future is to ensure that that child is raised in a safe, loving family. The services supported by this legislation are targeted where they are needed most, to help parents at risk of abusing or neglecting their children or to prevent repeated abuse and neglect.

On May 23, the Ways and Means Human Resources Subcommittee, which I chair, held a hearing on this legislation. We heard from a broad array of voices in support of the extension of these programs and in support of changes requiring States to focus resources more on services for children and at-risk families.

Earlier this year, the President signed the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, which provided \$200 million in new funds for services to better protect children over the next 5 years. I am very pleased that this legislation targets these increased resources so more foster children are visited on a monthly basis.

The Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General recently reported that these visits were not occurring. Only 20 States could tell whether the caseworkers actually visited children in foster care on a monthly basis. In seven of these 20 States, the reports found that fewer than half of the children in foster care were visited on a monthly basis. Research shows that children who are visited on a more frequent basis are more quickly placed in permanent homes and experience other positive outcomes, compared to children not visited.

Newspapers are frequently reporting the horrors of children neglected by the very system charged to protect them. The increased monitoring promoting by this bill makes sense and would go a long way towards better protecting these vulnerable children.

Mr. Speaker, we still have more work to do to improve our Nation's foster care system. Time and time again, we hear of children lingering in foster care, bounced from home to home. In some cases, foster children have lived in more than 50 homes. This is unacceptable, and we will continue to work to improve this program so that all children can live with a family that loves them.

This legislation brings us one step closer to that important goal. It has widespread bipartisan support, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we have before us today the Senate companion bill to the Herger-McDermott Child Family Services and Improvement Act. We have put the Senate version on the House calendar to facilitate action. The Senate version is slightly different than

our bill, but we want to move ahead as quickly as possible, so we are going to strike the Senate language and insert the Herger-McDermott language in its entirety. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

It is a pleasure to work with Mr. HERGER on this issue. In doing so, we will make America a little safer for vulnerable kids. Countless children across America need us to protect them from harm. In effect, the House today is fulfilling its obligation as first responders. For too many children, we are the first and the last line of defense.

Mr. HERGER and I have produced bipartisan legislation that takes a modest step forward in safeguarding vulnerable children. This bill is an attempt to find common ground so that together we can pursue the common good. I believe this can be a model for the future. Certainly more needs to be done, but every journey starts with the first step.

This legislation renews the program called Promoting Safe and Stable Families. This is a small but vital program that supports the States in their efforts to prevent child abuse from occurring or from reoccurring. We maintain the flexibility of the current program by allowing the States to use Federal money to provide a wide variety of family support, preservation, reunification and other services, and we provide greater support to Native American tribes for these purposes.

We also recognize and support the courageous caregivers serving on the front lines. For the first time in 7 years, the bill provides new Federal funding to the States, \$40 million, to help them meet the challenges on two fronts. The first is having the resources to enable monthly caseworker visits for children in foster care. The second is investing more in the child welfare workforce.

We know that more frequent interaction between caseworkers and foster kids leads to better outcomes. We also know that difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified caseworkers negatively affects the safety and permanency for at-risk kids. In fact, the Government Accounting Office warned us in 2003 report about the risks incurred by children when the average tenure of child care worker is less than 2 years. A lot of caring, dedicated caseworkers leave their job, not because they want to, but because they are forced to leave due to financial circumstances. We begin to address this issue in a bill with a \$40 million downpayment. This shows, I think, that we mean business.

The legislation also makes changes in other child care support programs that have proven to be effective, and we want to keep them working to benefit kids and families. Despite naysayers, government can be an instrument for good. Today in this bill we can prove it.

Again, I thank my colleague Mr. HERGER for his work. Working together, I think we have produced a good piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us today will provide nearly \$4 billion for up-front child abuse prevention activities over the next 5 years; it will hold States accountable for visiting children in foster care on at least a monthly basis; it will continue funding for programs that help State courts address child welfare issues; and it will continue funding for programs that provide mentors for children with a parent in prison.

Again, I would like to thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) and all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work in crafting this legislation. I believe it will take an important step towards improving our Nation's child protection system.

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5640, the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006.

This bipartisan legislation improves Child and Family Services by reauthorizing and improving the Promoting Safe and Stable Families, PSSF, program.

The bill invests about \$4 billion during the next five years into these programs, to help ensure children are protected from abuse and neglect.

Included in this investment is a targeting of a \$40 million increase in PSSF Funds that were included in the Deficit Reduction Act.

The Deficit Reduction Act increased mandatory PSSF funds by \$40 million per year (\$305 to \$345 million).

This important legislation targets this \$40 million for State efforts to ensure children in foster care are visited on a monthly basis.

This responds to recent Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General concerns and other data indicating that monthly visits were not occurring, despite State policy.

Beginning with FY 2008, only States that show improvement in completing monthly visits of foster children would continue to receive these funds.

Holding States accountable on this is crucial since research has shown that frequent caseworker visits are strongly related to more timely permanence for kids as well as other outcomes the better.

This legislation will also make needed improvements to the Child Welfare Services, CWS, Program.

Under current law, the CWS program is permanently authorized at \$325 million per year and was last updated significantly in 1980. CWS generally overlaps PSSF program purposes.

The legislation reorganizes and updates the CWS program, making important technical changes including a new State plan requirement for doctors to be actively involved in assessing the health and well-being of foster children.

The legislation ensures future Congressional review by authorizing the CWS program through FY 2011.

This legislation creates a new 10 percent limit on CWS spending for administrative expenses.

This legislation reauthorizes the Court Improvement Act.

The legislation reauthorizes through FY 2011 the current \$10 million set-aside for general Court Improvement Program activities provided from PSSF funds. (Note: DRA also provided an additional \$20 million for each of FYs 2006 through 2010 to improve data collection and increase training of court personnel.)

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE MENTORING CHILDREN OF PRISONERS PROGRAM

The legislation reauthorizes through FY 2011 such sums as may be necessary. (House Appropriations Committee FY2007 Labor HHS bill would provide \$40 million for this program.)

With this legislation, we are encouraging states to invest Federal funds in services that effectively assist at-risk families, protect children from abuse and neglect, and prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their parents.

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the House amendments to the Child and Family Services Improvement Act, which include reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. I would like to thank the gentleman from California, Mr. HERGER, the chairman of our Human Resources subcommittee, and the gentleman from Washington, Mr. McDERMOTT, for their work on this important legislation.

This program does just what it says: it promotes safe and stable families. The amendments before you today guarantee \$40 million in funding to ensure that States are able to recruit, retain, and train highly qualified and skilled child welfare caseworkers. This funding is critically important. These amendments are exactly the same as H.R. 5640, which the Ways and Means Committee reported last month. The funding included in these amendments is crucial to making sure that foster children are provided with high level services and safe and stable placements.

A 2003 GAO report highlighted the importance of child welfare agencies being staffed with the very best caseworkers. The GAO found that when caseworkers are well trained and have manageable caseloads they are able to conduct frequent home visits to assess a child's situation and ensure that child's safety. Skilled caseworkers are also able to make well-supported decisions that lead to permanent placements of foster children in nurturing homes. However, when caseworker turnover is high, agencies are not able to meet Federal safety and permanency goals. There is a very strong correlation between caseworker recruitment and retention and safety and permanency outcomes for children.

For Example, the GAO report found:

In Texas, due to caseworker turnover, an investigation into alleged abuse was delayed by 3 months. By the time the caseworker was able to make a home visit, the abuse could not be substantiated and the child remained in that placement. Similar occurrences took place in other states at which the GAO looked.

Caseloads should not exceed 18 per caseworker, however the American Public Human Services Association, APHSA, data showed that workers were handling an average of 24 to 31 children each.

The GAO's survey of caseworkers around the country indicated that a lack of home visits and inadequate documentation leads to permanency placement decisions being made without thorough evaluations of the adequacy and appropriateness of the placement.

The GAO reviewed the Department of Health and Human Services', HHS, Child and Family Services Reviews, CFSR. All of the 27 CFSRs reviewed showed that workforce deficiencies—high caseloads, training deficiencies, and staffing shortages—contributed greatly to the non-attainment of assessment measures, including timely investigation of child mistreatment and facilitation of permanent placements.

In addition, in their comments on the GAO report the Administration for Children and Families, ACF, agreed with the GAO and stated that ACF's own research showed a direct relationship between the consistency and quality of caseworker visits with the child and family and the achievement of positive case outcomes.

Unfortunately, State child welfare agencies face numerous challenges in retention and recruitment of caseworkers. Caseloads are high, salaries are low, and training is minimal. To overcome these challenges, it is vital for us to move to provide States with the means to hire and retain the very best caseworkers. The \$40 million included in these amendments will go toward solving the problem of caseworker recruitment and retention. Although \$40 million is not nearly enough to fully address the problem, it is vital that we at least provide that much. The money will go toward ensuring that foster children are visited at least monthly by a caseworker. If States are able to accomplish this goal they will then be able to access additional money to improve caseworker retention, recruitment and training. The money can only be used for that purpose.

We have over 800,000 children who spend time in foster care each year. This body has an obligation to make sure that these children are in safe and stable environments. I urge you to support the House amendments and the opportunity they provide to improve the lives of tens of thousands of children.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. 3525, The Improving Outcomes for Children Affected by Methamphetamine Act of 2006. This legislation would amend the Social Security Act to better serve the special needs of children in families affected by methamphetamine abuse and addiction.

It is never cliché to reiterate the fact that children are our future. Children in our homes and in our families too often suffer the tragic ills of methamphetamine abuse. S. 3525 serves to protect children who suffer at the hands of methamphetamine abuse.

I believe that this legislation will improve the lives of at-risk children in our nation. This legislation will continue our nation's commitment to at-risk families through the reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Programs.

Moreover, this legislation notably improves support to children affected by methamphetamine within their families by placing increased emphasis on counseling and assistance to children affected by methamphetamine abuse, especially children placed into foster care.

The use of methamphetamine in the United States is increasing at an alarming rate. Methamphetamine abuse has attacked communities across America and has also affected our community on Guam. It is important that we continue our work to aggressively combat methamphetamine abuse and its terrible effects on American families and our children.

I strongly support S. 3525 because it aids our fight against methamphetamine abuse and because it also serves to protect our nation's greatest resource and one of most vulnerable communities, our children. I urge my colleagues' support for S. 3525.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 3525, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the Senate bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend part B of title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the safe and stable families program, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RETURNED AMERICANS PROTECTION ACT OF 2006

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5865) to amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to temporarily increase funding for the program of temporary assistance for United States citizens returned from foreign countries, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5865

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Returned Americans Protection Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. TEMPORARY INCREASE IN FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENS RETURNED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Section 1113(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1313(d)) is amended by striking "2003" and inserting "2006".

SEC. 3. REPORT BY THE INSPECTOR GENERAL.

Not later than March 1, 2007, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, shall submit to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate a written report describing how funds made available to carry out section 1113 of the Social Security Act have been used to provide assistance to United States citizens returned to the United States on or after July 20, 2006, and before the most recent date covered by the report, after evacuation from Lebanon, including a breakdown of program costs incurred with regard to repatriating individuals from Lebanon, including for (1) direct assistance to individuals

(such as costs of domestic travel and short-term lodging), and (2) administrative costs (such as for caseworkers, security, and related expenses).

SEC. 4. CONTINUATION OF REPATRIATION PROGRAM THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2007.

Section 1113 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1313) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"(f) The authorities provided by this section shall expire on September 30, 2007."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Returned Americans Protection Act, H.R. 5865. This legislation will help our Nation to continue to assist U.S. citizens fleeing the violence in Lebanon as they return home to the United States.

In recent days, thousands of Americans have fled the violence in Lebanon. Thousands already have landed in the United States, and thousands more will be arriving in the coming days. In all, as many as 15,000 U.S. citizens may be returning.

State workers are prepared to assist them, helping join them with family or friends, and even make arrangements for their connecting travel. If the arriving citizen has no other resources, provision will be made for a loan or, in exceptional circumstances, a grant to cover their continued travel expenses or temporary lodging costs, all of which costs money, including to reimburse States for caseworkers to offer this assistance.

In a program that is limited by a current \$1 million cap on annual spending, experiencing this large influx of needy, especially at this time in the fiscal year, is a challenge. As the Secretary of Health and Human Services said in a letter to Speaker HASTERT dated just yesterday, "We need your assistance in lifting this cap as soon as possible."

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us, H.R. 5865, provides that assistance. It temporarily lifts the program's current \$1 million funding cap, allowing for continued assistance for Americans returning from Lebanon. It also improves oversight over this little known program by making two additional steps.

First, it requires the HHS Inspector General to review program spending on those repatriated from Lebanon. The report will break down administrative

costs versus costs for travel and lodging. That way, Congress will have more information about what this program actually does.

The second thing this legislation does to improve oversight is to sunset the current repatriation program at the end of fiscal year 2007, more than 13 months from now. This will provide Congress sufficient time to review the program and decide where improvements are needed.

□ 1045

This change also is estimated by the Congressional Budget Office as saving \$4 million, fully offsetting the cost of the additional assistance to those evacuating Lebanon. So we will cover short-term needs and get better data that we will use to improve this program for the long run. That is a win-win for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good bill which pays for additional services by improved oversight. We should approve it. I call on the U.S. Senate to do the same as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, one of the good things the Federal Government does is provide a lifeline to American citizens who suddenly find themselves in grave danger. That is exactly what has happened to 25,000 American citizens in Beirut who had signed in at the embassy when the Middle East crisis erupted.

There were plenty of pictures on the evening news of Americans desperately trying to flee the conflict. Many were able to escape on chartered flights. When they arrive back in the United States, a government employee will meet them at the airport and ask whether they need any assistance, including help in securing and paying for connecting flights, temporary lodging, food, or medical assistance.

Many don't need much help, but some do. And an important, but little known, program of the Social Security Act enables us to help Americans who escape the conflict with their lives and little else.

This is government at its best: helping our citizens in a time of crisis, responding quickly and effectively to meet the needs of our people. We are doing more than watching a crisis unfold on television. We are actually helping American citizens. And the Republicans, for some strange reason, want to kill this program. So much for the common good.

Now, this program has worked effectively for a mere \$1 million a year in funding. But the crisis in Lebanon has drained the fund, and the administration has requested a temporary increase to \$6 million.

That is all it will take to make sure that Americans have a lifeline to reach our own citizens. But the Republicans